

REMARKS

The pending Office Action addresses claims 1-16 and 18-37, allowing claims 18-37 and rejecting claims 1-16.

Amendments to the Claims

Applicants cancel claims 1-16 and 37. No new matter is added.

Objections to the Drawings

The Examiner objects to the drawings as failing to show "the suture loops being fixedly disposed on the suture anchors." As indicated above, Applicants cancel claim 37 thereby obviating the basis for this objection.

Rejection Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner rejects claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 12, and 16 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,143,017 of Thal ("Thal"). Although Applicants continue to disagree, in order to expedite prosecution Applicants cancel claims 1-16 thereby obviating the basis for this rejection. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the cancelled claims in a continuation application.

Rejection Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103

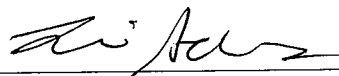
The Examiner rejects claims 2, 5, 7-11, and 13-15 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Thal. As indicated above, claims 1-16 are cancelled thereby obviating the basis for this rejection.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and allowance thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney for Applicants if such communication is deemed to expedite prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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